



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

October 17, 2002

DIVISION OF
LAND RESOURCE
PROTECTION

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GRAY DAVIS
GOVERNOR

Mr. Paul Marshall
California Department of Water Resources
Bay-Delta Office
1416 9th Street
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

Dear Mr. Marshall:

The Department of Conservation (Department) has received the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the South Delta Improvements Program (SDIP). The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) are lead agencies under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The project involves increasing the maximum allowable diversion capacity at the State Water Project's Clifton Court Forebay, providing an adequate water supply for South Delta Water Agency (SDWA) and improving conditions for San Joaquin River salmon in the southern portion of the Delta.

The Department is responsible for monitoring farmland conversion on a statewide basis and administering the California Land Conservation (Williamson) Act. The Department is also responsible for statewide oversight of the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA). Some of the project elements included in the project description involve dredging. If disposal, storage, or reuse of dredge materials is to take place on Williamson Act contracted lands or prime agricultural land, the environmental document should include a discussion of impacts to these agricultural resources and provide a mechanism for mitigation to these impacts. Further, dredging is defined as "mining" under the Public Resources Code, with some exceptions. In the preparation of the CEQA/NEPA document for this project, the lead agencies should consult with the Department's Office of Mine Reclamation to determine whether the dredging activities require a county mining permit and preparation of a reclamation plan. Please do not hesitate to contact us for assistance.

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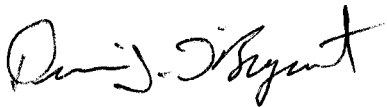
We ask that the environmental document be sent to the following address when it becomes available for agency review and comment: Department of Conservation

Division of Land Resource Protection
801 K Street
Sacramento, CA 95814

Attn: Dennis O'Bryant, Manager
Williamson Act Program

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to this Notice of Preparation. Please contact Jeannie Blakeslee at (916) 323-4943 if you have any questions or require assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis J. O'Bryant", is written over the printed name.

Dennis J. O'Bryant
Manager
Williamson Act Program